

House Passes America COMPETES Act; Legislation Heads to the President

WASHINGTON – Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (NY-28), Chair of the House Rules Committee, today praised legislation investing in America's short and long-term economic competitiveness. Today Slaughter again voted for the America COMPETES Act after it passed through her Rules Committee.

The legislation assists manufacturers by increasing their global competitiveness and creating jobs. More than 1,000 jobs in the Rochester area alone have been retained or added by the federal Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program which will be strengthened by this legislation. The measure also makes key investments in science, innovation and education with the aim of rebuilding our national economy and creating jobs in Western New York.

This is the second time the House is voting on this legislation, also having passed it in May. With today's passage, the America COMPETES Act heads to President Obama for his signature.

"We have watched America's scientific and technological superiority diminish over the past twenty years, adversely impacting job prospects for middle and working class Americans especially in Western New York," said Slaughter. "We know that research leads to innovation and innovation leads to the good paying jobs that will rebuild our economy. It's not rocket science, but it is the key to driving rocket science and a necessary public investment."

The COMPETES Act, which the House passed today reauthorizes funding for long-term research programs at the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy Office of Science, and the labs at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, on a path to double funding for basic scientific research over 10 years.

It also spurs job creation by easing loans for small and mid-sized technology manufacturers at a time when many can't afford additional burdens during the recession. The legislation reduces cost-sharing in the federal MEP program over the next 5 five years, ensuring that critical investment services remain affordable for the nation's small and mid-sized manufacturers.

Western New York has benefited from research funding and the COMPETES Act is another commitment to strengthening our short-term and long-term economic revitalization.

“The investments in support of American technology outlined in the COMPETES Act are critical to maintaining our manufacturers’ edge in an increasingly competitive global economy. High Tech Rochester, as the Finger Lakes Center of the Manufacturing Extension Partnership, is obviously interested in long term, stable funding for the MEP program that will allow us to continue our work with the region’s small and mid-size manufacturers,” said Mike Haugh, Managing Director of High Tech Rochester. “In the past year, our clients have reported \$25 million increased and retained sales, \$17 million of new investment and 1,015 new and retained jobs as a result of our services. In addition, we have a great interest in COMPETES Act funding for federal research and STEM education. This research generates innovations that our clients can adopt to expand their product lines, grow their companies and create new jobs. Improved technical education is critical to filling these high paying jobs and keeping growing companies in Upstate New York.”

“Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) is a tremendous engine for job creation in western New York and nation-wide. Our work helping small- and mid-size manufacturing companies with process and product innovation has created or saved over 5,900 jobs just in Niagara, Erie, Chautauqua, Cattaraugus and Allegany counties since 2000,” said Benjamin Rand, President of Insyte Consulting, the western New York MEP Center.